



SCHOOL PROGRAM

ATHLETE STORIES

John Morris —
Healthy Active Living // Grade 2-3

About John

BORN December 16, 1978

BIRTHPLACE Winnipeg, Manitoba

SPORT Curling

OLYMPIC GAMES PyeongChang 2018,
Vancouver 2010

FAVOURITE HEALTHY SNACK

Fruit smoothie

FAVOURITE ANIMAL

Grizzly Bear



John Morris — Healthy Active Living

John Morris sits in the gym at the Olympic Athletes village in Vancouver. The athletes live and train in the village during the Olympics. John is sweating. He has just finished dozens of sit-ups, push-ups, and chin-ups. His heart is pumping. He smiles. He is ready. In just a few hours he will play in the gold medal final... in curling.

"Lots of people don't think Curling is a hard sport. Lots of curlers used to think they could 'have a good time and then go out and curl'. That is not true anymore. Today, curlers have to work as hard as any athlete. We train as hard as pro hockey players. We have to if we want to win gold medals."

John says he was brought up in the "old-style" world of curling. He ate plenty of cheeseburgers and still won a number of top events. He won two junior world titles and then he began competing at a higher level. It was difficult. When he was in his early 20's John and his team lost in the national final.

"We had done well to get to the final but by the end of the week we ran out of gas. When you're tired you make physical mistakes. You also make mental mistakes. The difference between winning and losing is often just a few centimetres. We were giving that up and it was costing us crucial games."

Not long after that, John finished third in the qualifying tournament for the 2006 Olympic Winter Games in Turin. He was getting close to his dream of representing Canada at the Olympics, but he was still devastated. He was determined to get better.

"I looked in the mirror. I asked myself what I was missing in my training. The answer was my physical conditioning. That changed then and there."

John flexes his arms. He feels good. He feels fit. He feels strong. He has to be strong. Curling stones are heavy. They are made of granite and weigh more than 40 lbs. Curlers have to propel the stones all the way down the ice toward a very small target. They have to be accurate.

"The speed of the curling stone is important. You have to throw the stone hard enough to knock out the other team's

rocks. You also sweep in front of the stone. When you sweep you melt the ice. That helps the stone go farther. It also helps you aim the stone. Sweeping is hard work."

John has played other sports all his life. He took lessons from those sports and used them to help train as a curler. John does lots of strength training. He also runs and rides a bike, especially in the off-season. John took courses in nutrition and began eating better.

"We stopped going to fast-food restaurants at tournaments. Now our first stop on a road trip is the local supermarket. We choose healthier food that will allow us to perform to our max."

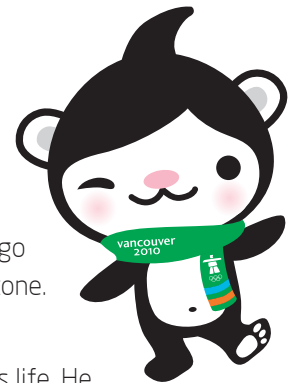
John also started doing yoga. That helped his strength, balance, flexibility and also his ability to focus. He was better physically. He could concentrate more. He got better at curling.

"Sports are so important when you are growing up. Playing sports makes you more fit and it helps you focus better in school. Sports help you grow smarter. Sports also teach you valuable lessons about fair play, communication, and teamwork."

All John's hard work pays off in Vancouver. He and his team don't fade. Millions watch the game on TV. John makes a crucial play late in the game. He knocks out two Norwegian stones and keeps his team in the lead. It's exactly the situation he's been training for since he stared at himself in the mirror years ago. They beat Norway 6-3.

"If there's one hope I have it's that kids see how tough curling is. I hope they see how cool it is. I hope they see how important it is that they participate in a variety of sports and engage in healthy living over their entire lifetimes."

The gold medal that John has earned through sweat and hard work will certainly help.



John Morris — Healthy Active Living



1. John started eating healthy food and exercising to improve his fitness. Working with a friend, make two grocery 'lists', a list of healthy choices and one of unhealthy choices. Circle the list of food that John liked before he improved his fitness.

Healthy	Unhealthy
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.
6.	6.



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2. Which list of food do you like? Draw a picture of yourself eating your favorite healthy snack.



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